



State of Louisiana  
Department of Social Services  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
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BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821

KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO  
GOVERNOR

ANN SILVERBERG WILLIAMSON  
SECRETARY

May 25, 2005

TO ALL OCS PROVIDERS:

RE: CRIMINAL RECORD CLEARANCES

This letter is to inform you that all criminal record clearances must be conducted through the Louisiana State Police (LSP). We have contacted LSP to verify approved firms/agencies that may conduct criminal record clearances as required in RS 15:587 and RS 46:51.2. While there are private firms that are conducting these background checks, they are not authorized to conduct clearances on employees/potential employees of child-caring facilities. According to the information obtained, only Louisiana State Police has this authority.

Per DSS Licensing standards, OCS contract requirements, and in keeping with the OCS Program Improvement Plan for the Federal Child and Family Service Reviews, criminal record clearances must be requested and obtained prior to having a new employee be in direct contact with children/ youth. A satisfactory criminal record clearance must be obtained for any individual who has contact with and/or provides direct care work with any child/youth. While we realize that it often takes several weeks to obtain the information from the criminal record clearance, our paramount concern is the safety of our youth.

An Individual may be employed prior to the actual receipt of the satisfactory criminal record clearance; however, direct contact and/or work with any child/youth must be delayed until the clearance is received. We recognize there can be a time period involved while awaiting the criminal records; however, this time can be utilized to obtain other necessary documentation such as medical statements, TB tests, driver's license, etc. as well as conducting required orientation and training that are necessary for employment. Licensing has issued a directive to the reviewing staff that verification of the criminal record clearance must be received prior to an employee having contact with the children/youth. Therefore it is imperative that the date the criminal record clearance is received and the date the employee begins working in any direct care capacity of children is clearly documented. This will be a critical issue during reviews by DSS Licensing and OCS.

We very much appreciate all you do in providing excellent care for the youth that you serve. We applaud your commitment to excellence and to these youth.

Please feel free to contact me at (225) 342-4017 if you have any questions or concerns about this information.

Sincerely,

M. Dianne Kirkpatrick, LCSW  
Child Welfare Specialist 6  
Residential and Private Foster Care Section

c: Marty Gibson, OCS, Division Director  
Yvonne Stewart, Licensing